Regarding Claims 5-18, rejected under 35 U.S.C. Sec. 112, second paragraph, this rejection is overcome by the foregoing amendment to base Claims 5 and 12 wherein the word "each" in line two of the preamble is replaced by the indefinite article –a–, thus placing Claims 5 and 12 in allowable condition under Section 112. Claims 4-11 and 13-18, depending respectively on Claims 5 and 12, have been reviewed and found to be consistent with Claims 5 and 12 as amended. Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of this rejection as to Claims 5-18.

Regarding Claims 5, 6, 12 and 13, rejected under 35 U.S.C. Sec. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,047,111, Sugiura et al. (*Sugiura*), this rejection is respectfully traversed as follows.

The "virtual (logical) printer system" of *Sugiura* includes only one physical printer or print engine (see Abstract, line 4: "one unit of physically existing print apparatus"). In *Sugiura*, each one of a plurality of host devices is defined in separate relationship to the one physical printer as a "logical printer." The system accommodates printing requests from the plurality of host devices in parallel and schedules the print jobs for the one physical printer sequentially. Thus, if an error occurs, a *print job* (i.e., for the logical printer rendering the print job) stops and essentially goes offline, its place taken by the next *print job* (and, the next "logical printer" in the queue). Thus, in *Sugiura*, in event of an error condition, the print job cannot be re-routed to another physical printer because there is only one physical printer. *Sugiura* is not capable of performing Applicants' inventions as recited in base Claims 5 and 12 because it cannot perform the re-routing step from one (physical) print engine to a second (physical) print engine. The same applies to dependent Claims 6 and 13 which contain all of the limitations of the respective base Claims 5 and 12 as amended. Therefore Applicant respectfully submits that, as amended, all the claims are patentable over the prior art of record and respectfully requests the withdrawal of this rejection.

Applicants have now made an earnest attempt in order to place this case in condition for allowance. For the reasons stated above, Applicants respectfully request full allowance of the claims

as amended. Please charge any additional fees or deficiencies in fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 20-0780/TRSY-24,657 of HOWISON, THOMA & ARNOTT, L.L.P.

Respectfully submitted,
HOWISON, THOMA & ARNOTT, L.L.P.
Attorneys for Applicants

Gregory M. Howison
Registration No. 30,646

GMH:jk

P.O. Box 741715
Dallas, Texas 75374-1715
Tel: 972-479-0462
Fax: 972-479-0464
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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

5. (Amended) A method for automatically processing printer errors occurring during printing of a print job in a virtual printer system wherein [each] a virtual printer is configurable with a plurality of physical print engines, comprising the steps of:

detecting occurrence of an error condition during printing of at least a portion of a print job in one of the print engines in the virtual printer; and

re-routing the remainder of the at least a portion of the print job not processed by the one print engine to a second print engine in the virtual printer system.

12. (Amended) An apparatus for automatically processing printer errors occurring during printing of a print job in a virtual printer system wherein [each] a virtual printer is configurable with a plurality of physical print engines, comprising:

a detector for detecting occurrence of an error condition during printing of at least a portion of a print job in one of the print engines in the virtual printer; and

a router for re-routing the remainder of the at least a portion of the print job not processed by the one print engine to a second print engine in the virtual printer system.